

## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

### **NOTICE**

July 6, 2017

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**TO:** All Department Personnel

**FROM:** Chief of Police

**SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE INTERACTIONS WITH YOUTH PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS**

Each year the Los Angeles Police Department provides opportunities for thousands of young men and women to enrich their lives through Department-sponsored youth prevention, intervention, and education programs such as the Police Cadets, Jeopardy, Juvenile Impact Program, Police Activities League, Police Orientation and Preparation Program, and Police Academy Magnet Program. Department employees from every division and assignment have worked tirelessly to improve the lives of children and youth who participate in these vital community policing programs.

When parents allow their son or daughter to participate in a Department-sponsored youth program, every employee is responsible for the care and protection of that youth program participant. Department employees must ensure that every youth participant is able to flourish in a safe, nurturing, and professional environment that is free of any inappropriate or unprofessional conduct.

*Department employees are therefore reminded that all contacts and interactions with youth participants shall remain professional in nature and strictly comply with applicable Department policies and procedures. Failure to do so is considered serious misconduct.*

In addition to existing policies and procedures, when interacting with youth participants Department employees shall comply with the following requirements:

- **One-on-One Interactions** – Generally, a minimum of two Department employees, or one Department employee and one adult volunteer (21 years of age or above), must be present when interacting with an individual youth participant. One-on-one interactions between Department employees and youth participants are prohibited in closed spaces and/or out of the view of others. All efforts should be made to interact with youth participants in a manner that allows a vantage point for others (Department employees, other youth participants, the general public, etc.) to observe. When interacting with any youth participant, an adult of the same gender as the youth participant shall be present whenever possible.

**Note:** Generally, an employee or adult volunteer may interact with groups of youth participants (two or more) in circumstances such as transportation to and from events, overseeing community service-oriented functions (e.g., Dodger details and Hollywood Bowl details), cadet post meetings, and after-school programs.

- **Physical Contact** – Physical contact between adults and youth participants should be kept to a minimum. While it is acceptable to shake hands, provide a supportive pat on the back, or use appropriate physical contact when demonstrating or teaching a skill, contact of an inappropriate or intimate nature is always prohibited.
- **Personal Relationships** – Any intimate personal relationship or attempt to develop an intimate personal relationship with a youth participant is strictly prohibited regardless of the youth participant's age.
- **Social Media** – Social media and electronic communications such as text messaging, e-mail, blogs, personal websites, Facebook, SnapChat, and WhatsApp, etc. are popular forms of communication, especially with youth participants. In order to effectively communicate with youth participants, plan events, give directions, and recruit, Department employees assigned to youth-related functions may utilize phone, text messaging, and various social media platforms. Department employees shall not utilize text messaging, phone calls, or any other electronic communication (including all social media platforms) to convey information of a personal or intimate nature or any information outside the scope of official Department duties. In addition, any electronic communication with a youth participant shall, when possible, include a minimum of one other Department employee, adult volunteer (21 years of age or above), parent, or legal guardian.
- **Department Vehicles** – Youth participants are prohibited from operating any Department motor vehicle, including but not limited to emergency response vehicles, unmarked vehicles, plain cars, vans, trucks, and motorcycles.

Department employees are expected to mentor, teach, inspire, and guide the young men and women who participate in Department-sponsored youth programs while providing a safe and positive environment. Inappropriate conduct undermines these important programs for the City's youth and erodes the community's trust that the Department must maintain to keep the community safe.

Should you have any questions, please contact Commander Jeffrey Bert, Community Policing and Policy Group, at (213) 486-6605.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CHARLIE BECK', with a stylized flourish at the end.

CHARLIE BECK  
Chief of Police

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